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several were not without acquaintance with it, and a few were expert engravers. The list included Messrs. T. W. Wood, H. W. Robbins, Charles H. Miller, J. C. Nicoll, Charles S. Reinhart, A. F. Bellows, Louis C. Tiffany, and Walter Shirlaw. On the list of early members was also Mr. J. T. Sabin, of whose style an effective little etching from *Nature*, appearing in the *Print Collector*, edited by Mr. Robert Hoe, Jr., and recently published, may be mentioned as an example. Mr. F. S. Church, one of the most assiduous of etchers, was subsequently elected, and the circle has later been increased by the admission of several holding the rank of Academicians.

The large proportion of professional artists in the club would seem in general favourable to development, although not invariably does the best talent of the painter serve to give the highest value to his work in etching. The latter most of all demands the giving of the spirit of what is represented, a perfect etching having simply what is necessary to this purpose. From want of the right sense of picturesqueness, the etcher's most indispensable qualification, very excellent colourists have failed completely in representations with the point. On the other hand, men like Haden and Whistler, possessed of uncommon ability to express most with the least means, show knowledge of the requirements of the art where some of the best of artists with the brush prove unsuccessful.

A marked influence of the Club is that of an interest which it has created, causing men to do a great deal, etchers being equipped with printing-presses and other paraphernalia, and working with amazing industry; fortunately, they are spared the inconvenience of plethoric accumulations by that advantage which the print-collector has of finding in comparatively small spaces an adequate accommodation for numerous treasured things. To the monthly meetings, which are the occasions for discussion of methods and criticism of works submitted by members, is credited a vigorous growth of ideas. Artists' proofs, to the number of not less than one hundred and fifty, have thus been brought under critical examination by the Society, and among workers of all degrees of proficiency ambition finds itself vastly stimulated.

The Club has been represented in several recent exhibitions, as first in Boston about two years since, at the Art Club of that city, in which a few interesting prints, etched by Mr. Smillie, Dr. Yale, and R. Swain Gifford, made their appearance. Several of them were purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts, and remained in Boston. In the Chicago exhibition of the past season, a collection of some extent made up from etchings of New York artists was

displayed; a large proportion of these prints found purchasers at that time, the circumstances being not the rule of the progress of the Society, which has been that of development rather than of material gain. Adherents of the art, fascinating as it is in itself, have at the utmost advantage reaped no very encouraging financial harvest, although the public taste for etching manifestly increases.

The method most in use among members of the Club is the old one with nitric acid, the same as practised by Rembrandt. The bath prepared from hydrochloric acid by Mr. Haden's process has not been extensively in favour, although, on the part of several, an advantage is claimed for it in the etcher's being able to use the point with the plate in the bath, the biting-in being effected meanwhile as rapidly as succeeding lines designed to have different degrees of depth are drawn; the necessity for stopping out in the usual manner is thus avoided, and the artist is able to complete his work out-of-doors. The objection of Mr. Gifford to the method is that, with the erosion of the plate, the point immersed in the acid is at the same time being gradually acted on with the result of more or less diminution of its size; the lines latest drawn on the etching-ground are consequently not quite identical in magnitude with those produced at first, and effects are thereby less calculable. This difficulty of maintaining a proper relation of lines is also noticed by M. Lalanne, who refers in his treatise to the Haden process as the invention of an amateur whom he does not mention by name. Mr. Smillie, who is now the President of the Etchers' Club, employs the two methods with equally satisfactory results: for a pure character of line the use of hydrochloric acid and chlorate of potash, in the combination known as the Dutch mordant, is preferred for his plates; but less patient etchers are inclined to imagine that this still acid is not accomplishing what is desired as efficaciously as would the ebullient nitric acid. For various reasons the older method is adopted by the majority; but growth and change are characteristic of the Society, as is most strikingly exemplified in the work of Mr. Farrer, whose practice has been almost radically changed within this period of association. In his views of New York Harbour, which have been most frequently chosen for subjects in recent etchings, the newer style distinctively prevails, as in a 'Sunset on the East River,' with its delightful effects of light and evening air. By his prolific series of recent works is given full opportunity for following his varying methods; and no more interesting study of development is offered than that of comparing these late productions with the immensely elaborated plates etched by Mr. Farrer ten years ago.

E. T. L.

THE SCIENCE OF COLOUR.



HE lay reader, as well as the scientist and artist, will find Professor Rood's "Modern Chromatics" an exceedingly interesting book.* Many of the theories long held regarding colour are shown to be worthless, and we are obliged to adopt new ones, the explanations of which are given by the author in language easily understood.

Usually, works of this kind are written by men interested only in science, who seem to care little to accumulate facts that are useful to painters; while, on the other hand, painters are generally not familiar with science, and it seldom occurs to them that scientific research of any kind can ever help them in their work. Field's "Chromatics" and Chevreul on "The Harmony and Contrast of Colours" have been more used by painters than any other works; but latterly Field's book has fallen into disuse, with the exception, chiefly, of some valuable experiments proving the durability of colours in pure and mixed states. Chevreul latterly has been more used by painters than any other writer on colour. But this book of Professor Rood's will prove of great service to painters and decorators. Its author has worked as patiently and seriously

out-doors, with sketch-book and pigments, as in his laboratory; and this earnest attention to the study of Art has enabled him more clearly to understand the needs of the painter, and more intelligently to select and describe his experiments.

The opening chapters especially are scientific. They treat of the reflection of light, the production of colour by dispersion, by interference, and by polarisation, and the colours of opalescent mediums. They are followed by discussions of more interest to artists and the general reader, the subjects being the mixture of colours, complementary colours, the change produced in the luminosity of colours by the admixture of white light, the modes of arranging colours in systems, the contrast of colours, their combination in pairs and triads, and finally the nature of painting and decoration. Among the theories overturned, is the old one that red, blue, and yellow, are the three primary colours. We are taught that, beyond a doubt, the three fundamental colours are red, green, and violet. Instead, too, of the old theory that red was the complement of green, orange of blue, and yellow of violet, we now are told that red is the complement of greenish-blue, blue of yellow, and green of purple.

The chapter on the mixture of colours introduces a great variety of experiments, and the reader will be astonished at the results of the different modes of mixing. Tables of mixtures are given

* Modern Chromatics, with Applications to Art and Industry. With 130 Illustrations, and Frontispiece in Colour. By Ogden N. Rood, Professor of Physics in Columbia College. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

that will serve many useful purposes. A very good idea can be formed of the disadvantages under which the artist labours in attempting to give luminous qualities to his colour, from the fact that these results show that, even with the greatest care in mixing some of the colours, their brilliancy is nearly fifty per cent. less than when they are mixed by means of rotating disks. These same disks are painted, and the colours used are, of course, dull in comparison with those of the solar spectrum.

The subject of complementary colours is one of vital importance to the painter; indeed, without a knowledge of the complementary colours, he cannot produce with certainty a good painting—that is, one that is fine in colour. Of course, a knowledge of these experiments, arranged in coloured tables, would not enable any one to become a colourist, but a colourist would be assisted by them in the matter of quantity and quality.

Beginning with the most common complementary colours, the author explains how to produce hundreds and even thousands of pairs of complementaries; and he suggests that we repeat these experiments, and take notes with colour, so that his tables may be useful for future reference. Physical causes are given for the appearance of these complementaries according to the theory of Thomas Young. The chapter on the effect on colour of change in luminosity, and the one on the duration of the impression upon the retina, we pass over as being rather of a scientific character, and not adapted greatly to interest the general reader. The chapter on the modes of arranging colours in systems is interesting, and of some practical value, but would probably be seldom referred to.

Coming to the subject of the contrast of colour, the writer begins with the simple experiments usually employed for this pur-

pose, and then passes on to more complicated and original ones, giving contrast, diagrams, and a table of the distances of the colours from one another. Directions follow for the construction of a simple apparatus by which simultaneous contrasts can be studied. The remarks on modified contrasts and the harmonious relation of colour show a keen appreciation of what is most highly valued by painters and decorators, and what is considered by them absolutely indispensable to a fine work of colour. The treatment of gradation is almost entirely from the painter's point of view; no mere scientist, destitute of a practical knowledge of painting, could have written so understandingly on this difficult subject—a subject the comprehension of which marks the difference between the great colourists and the ordinary painters. Formulas are given for the balances of colour in many books, but they have very little practical value; and Professor Rood, who is perfectly aware of this fact, says that the matters should be left to the taste and judgment of the painter. Probably, the only way of getting any intelligent instruction on the subject, would be to study the paintings of the best colourists. Formulas of the quantities and qualities of colour necessary for a painting can hardly be serviceable, when the subject of the interchange of colour plays so important a part in a good painting.

We cannot wholly agree with the writer in his opinion that form is so much more important than colour. Of course, form is necessary to the proper explanation of objects, but who can measure the importance of the influences that come from beautiful colour? The charm of the sunset sky is not dependent upon form, neither in the impressive solemnity of the twilight that precedes the night. The author's discourse on chromatic composition, with which the volume ends, is most charming.

ART-NOTES FROM PARIS.

THE WATER-COLOUR EXHIBITION.—THE DE NITTIS EXHIBITION.—MANET AND THE IMPRESSIONISTS.—M. BAUGNIET.—THE BLANCHARD SALE.—MR. SCHAUS IN PARIS.



HERE has been an unusual activity reigning in the world of Art during the present month. Generally speaking, April is very devoid of Art-topics of interest, owing to the near approach of the opening-day of the *Salon*. The artists have laid aside the brush and palette, and are meditating new themes; the preliminary exhibitions are closed, the picture-dealers are awaiting the vast display of the coming month, and stagnation is the universal rule. This year has brought about a notable change in this respect. The growing opposition to the *Salon* has taken form and shape in a number of private or minor exhibitions, all of which are interesting.

The second exhibition of the French Water-Colour Society is, in reality, its third, but as the intermediate one was made up of oil-paintings by its members, they do not seem to count it. I understand that they will never organise another exhibition of works in oil. Their last one was brilliantly successful both in an artistic and a pecuniary point of view, but it brought upon them so many demands for membership from the painters in oil, that they have determined to entrench themselves resolutely within the limits of their original plan. Not but what they would gladly have extended their circle if they could have done so, but the rooms that they have at their disposal for exhibition purposes are by no means large, and could not accommodate the works of a larger number of members than they now possess. Besides, as they founded their society as aquarellists they have decided that it will be best, hereafter, to restrict their exhibitions to water-colours merely—a wise decision, and one by which the galleries of the *Salon* will probably profit hereafter.

Detaille, among all the masters of water-colour who are represented on the walls of the elegant *salons* of the Rue Lafitte, shows supreme by the size and importance of his contributions, and the blended force, truth, and refinement of their execution. They are all English subjects, the young painter having recently paid a long

visit to London for the express purpose of studying English military types. First we have 'The Scots Guards returning from Drill through Hyde Park,' admirably painted, and full of life and expression. The scene is the main drive of the Park, under the soft, misty atmosphere of an English May. The white-coated Guards fill the central foreground with a needed effect of light; the foliage has the delicate tinting of early spring, and the general colouring is subdued. The varied English personalities have been perfectly caught and reproduced, not only in the countenances of the soldiers, but in the dress, *physique*, and general bearing of the bystanders. The young girl in a poke-bonnet and scanty skirts, who is holding a little boy by the hand, the pretty *equestrienne* sitting trim, erect, and graceful on her fine thoroughbred, the young gentleman-promenader with his umbrella under his arm, the blue-coated mounted policeman who waves back the advancing carriages with an authoritative gesture, are all distinctly and characteristically English. So, too, are the personages of Detaille's other large work, 'The Parade-Hour at the Tower of London.' The scene is the open space in front of the main gateway. A detachment of red-coated soldiers are just going through their exercise. A group of tourists, under the guidance of a good-natured-looking old beef-eater, occupy a prominent place in the foreground. Each individuality, from that of the stiff old gentleman who cares but little for the sight, down to the eager foreigner, who, with spectacles on nose, is busily engaged with his guide-book, has been carefully studied and accurately reproduced. Two small single figures, one of a Scotch piper and the other of a British grenadier, fill out the panel devoted to the works of Detaille.

Louis Leloir exhibits six works, all remarkable for the frolic grace and dainty fantasy of their conception, and for the delicate minuteness of their finish. One of the most remarkable of these is a fan, the subject of which is entitled 'Besieged,' and verily the poor hero of the picture *is* besieged with a vengeance. A young and handsome monk has built for himself a hermitage amid the